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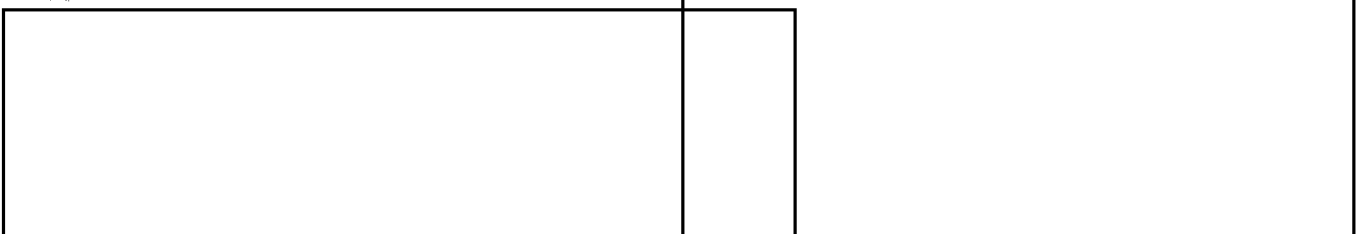
27 JAN 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Central Intelligence
THROUGH: Deputy Director, Intelligence
SUBJECT: Comment on Soviet Premier Khrushchev's 6
January Reference to Torture of Communists
Imprisoned in Capitalist Countries.

1. There are in fact Communists presently imprisoned in each of the countries specifically named by Khrushchev-- Spain, Portugal, Greece, West Germany, the UAR, Iraq, Iran, the United States and Paraguay. The number of such prisoners held at a given time in each of those countries is difficult if not impossible to assess. In some of the countries--Iran, Greece, UAR, and Iraq--Communists are arrested and jailed simply because they are Communists or suspected Communists. In the other countries, Communists have been imprisoned not on the charge of merely being Communists but on other charges such as subversion, open opposition to the government, plotting to overthrow the government, or espionage.

2. There is good evidence that Communists are tortured in some of the countries specified.

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[REDACTED] in Iraq, the police have long had a reputation for brutality and there is little doubt that Communist prisoners have been ill-treated. The GAK has subjected some Communist prisoners to indignities and hardships. The Iranian party leadership is now in the Soviet Union and conducts its activities in Iran from there. The Iranian Government arrests lower level Communists from time to time and there are occasional executions. In Paraguay, where about one third of the Central Committee of the Communist Party has been either killed or jailed, there has been reported torture of Communists by government troops.

3. There is no evidence of the use of torture on Communist prisoners in Greece, West Germany and, of course, the United States; on the contrary, in these countries they are given fair trials and treated well while serving prison sentences. At the present time, there are only two officials of the American Communist Party serving time for advocating violent overthrow of the US Government. Other Communists and fellow travelers in the US are serving sentences for espionage.

4. Khrushchev's purpose in reaffirming Soviet solidarity with "fighters for the cause of Communism in capitalist countries" probably was to portray the Soviet Party as the militant

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leader and protector of the world Communist movement and to undercut Chinese charges that the USSR's "peaceful co-existence" policy has weakened the revolutionary spirit and effectiveness of free world Communist parties. The selection of these nine specific countries in which comrades are "languishing in torture chambers" seems to have been intended primarily to symbolize the world-wide scope of the struggle against capitalist suppression.

17/
HUNTINGTON D. SHELTON
Assistant Director,
Current Intelligence

cc: DDCI

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